



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE LATIN OF THE FUTURE

By B. L. ULLMAN
University of Pittsburgh

"Take time by the forelock" is a familiar proverb and an old one, old even when Phaedrus reproduced it 1,900 years ago. And what does it mean? Take the opportunity before it reaches you, look ahead into the future before it has gone into the receding past. Nothing is said of the present—for there is no present. And so in speaking of the Latin of the future I am not posing as a prophet. The only alternative I had was to speak on the Latin of the past. But to speak on the past of an old subject is too much like conducting funeral obsequies. I repeat, I am not a prophet, but the future of Latin can be forecast in part from past tendencies. Prophecy requires inspiration, forecasting merely a little reasoning, or science, as it is now called.

Now just as I am getting comfortably started, up bobs Mr. Spoilsport, giggling at his own silly joke, and cries: "Stop, you're done with your speech already, for there will be no Latin in the future." Stupid as he is, we must silence him first, or he will be interrupting constantly. If he means a million years hence, we agree with him, but if he is referring to the next few generations or centuries, he is quite mistaken. For the past can tell us something about the future. The United States Commissioner of Education reports the following Latin enrolment of students in the secondary schools of the country:

1890.....	100,144
1895.....	205,006
1900.....	314,856
1905.....	391,067
1910.....	405,502
1915.....	503,985

It is noteworthy that the most recent increase, in the five years between 1910 and 1915, is greater than that in the ten years between

1900 and 1910. It is true of course that this is part of a general large increase in the secondary schools, and that relatively the number of Latin students is less than in 1910 (dropping from about 49.5 per cent to about 39 per cent; yet in 1890 only about 33.6 per cent of the students in the schools studied Latin). The difference is due to the extension of the high school into vocational fields. Latin is still being studied by more pupils than German, French, and Spanish put together. We may expect a falling off in Latin in some of the eastern states in the near future, but this will be counterbalanced by increases in the West. Recent statistics show encouraging gains in Iowa, Kansas, and Wisconsin. The West has had its radicalism and is getting over it. The East has caught it and will have to be nursed until the attack is over. One thing seems clear, that the attendance in the upper years will decrease at least until the junior high school organization has become fairly general. With Latin begun in the seventh grade it is fair to expect that many pupils will continue it for four or five years.

Here comes Mr. Spoilsport again. Well, what now? You say that this growth in the number of Latin pupils is not a healthy one and represents only traditional inertia, that it is, in short, so much fat? 'Tis a pretty fancy that your words contain, plain though they be, and pretty fancies carry weight with the unthinking. But what if I show that the Latin of the future will be so attractive and so valuable that more and more diverse groups of pupils will study it? This is indeed already coming to be the case. In a number of high schools Latin has been introduced into commercial courses with great success. Even the educational experts, who as a class have made it their business in the past to be iconoclasts on all occasions (for advertising purposes?), are beginning to talk in different terms. Most notable are the words of Professor Bobbitt:

Latin is a living language in our country in that it provides half of our vocabulary. Pupils who would know English well should have a good knowledge of this living Latin. If the Latinists would shift their ground to this living Latin and provide means of teaching it fully and effectively for modern purposes, it is possible that the opposing schools of thought might here find

common ground upon which all could stand with some degree of comfort and toleration. When Latin study of the character here suggested is devised, it ought to be opened up to the students of all courses as an elective, so that it could be taken by all who wish a full appreciation and understanding of their semi-Latin mother-tongue. *Such a study ought to be required of the clerical students of the High School of Commerce.* In the meantime, however, all will have to wait until the Latinists have provided the plans and the materials.¹

Well, then, Latin has its future, and its future is not necessarily identical with its past. Most of those who attack Latin do so on the assumption that it is being universally taught in the same way that it was taught to them a generation ago. To this class President Eliot belongs. He is fighting shadows and killing dead men. The classicist is painfully astonished at the triteness of his charges. It is true that the pupil still drones his *amo*, *amas*, *amat*, as the monk tells his beads, and still finds his Gaul divided into three parts. But a great difference has begun in method, spirit, and emphasis.

The chief values of Latin study may be grouped under two heads, the linguistic and the content. The former is predominant in the earlier years of study, the latter in the later years. Out of a clearer conception of these values many changes in teaching are taking place.

On the linguistic side vocabulary is the most important for English and the Romance languages. There is great activity at present with a view to making Latin as helpful as possible for English, and we may expect further development in this direction. Careful attention to this matter will make even a one-year course in Latin worth while; and here we must remember that in the future the increase in Latin students will be in the first two years.

Further investigation concerning the Latin vocabulary most important for English is to be expected, but it is already abundantly clear that in large part the vocabulary of classical Latin which we have been teaching is the very vocabulary which is of most importance for English derivation. The improvement that we can effect is in a better selection for the first year; 90 to 95 per cent of the words in Caesar and Cicero (that is, of the parts read in the schools)

¹*What the Schools Teach and Might Teach*, p. 96. Cleveland Educational Survey, 1915. The italics are mine.

have one or more English derivatives. The same percentage holds for the 2,000 words recommended in Lodge's *Vocabulary of High-School Latin*. But it is not enough to select the best vocabulary; it is also necessary to teach the student how to use his Latin as a help to English, that is, the whole matter of word derivation in Latin and English both must be taken up. This involves chiefly the learning of the principal parts of verbs (for most derivatives come from the past participle) and of the simpler prefixes and suffixes. Our teaching of Latin for its own sake has suffered in the past from lack of emphasis on these points. A correction of this weakness will have the double advantage of helping Latin and English.

The importance of the Latin element in English is often overlooked, for reasons that cannot detain us now. In an unabridged dictionary 60 to 75 per cent of the words are of Latin origin. According to a recent estimate, not more than one-sixth of the words in the language are Anglo-Saxon. "But no one knows the whole dictionary," Mr. Spoilsport will say if we give him a chance. True. Then take a fairly extensive passage of ordinary English prose, count each word but once, and you will find in most cases that the words of Latin origin make up 60 to 70 per cent of the whole and are twice as numerous as those of Teutonic origin. If we omit the merely connective words, such as articles, prepositions, conjunctions, etc., the percentage of Latin words is even greater. The newer words coming into the language are overwhelmingly Latin and Greek. The unfamiliar words that the high-school or college student meets are almost all classical; the Anglo-Saxon words he has learned in childhood. On the other hand, it has been estimated that one-half of the original Anglo-Saxon vocabulary has been lost to modern English. More important still, most of the Anglo-Saxon prefixes and suffixes are dead, for they cannot be used to form new words. Their places have been taken by highly productive Latin forms. I once heard a psychologist use the word "functionalistically." Here is a Latin root to which are attached six suffixes, five Latin or Graeco-Latin and one Anglo-Saxon. And what inference do we draw from these facts? Not that Latin is a dead language, but that *English is dead*

and Latin is alive. That is turning the tables on our critics with a vengeance.

"But what's the use of studying Latin to learn English—why not study the English itself?" What's that? Oh yes, it's Mr. Spoilsport again. I had forgotten all about him. In the seventeenth century Sir Thomas Browne said: "If elegancy [the use of Latin words] still proceedeth, and English pens maintain that stream we have of late observed to flow from many, we shall, within a few years, be fain to learn Latin to understand English." The prophecy has come true, for elegancy hath proceeded, in spite of protests, and still proceedeth. One must learn Latin to understand English. It is true of course that one can get a good knowledge of English without any Latin, but it takes an enormous amount of reading. Latin is a short cut to that knowledge. "But why not teach our boys and girls a few important Latin roots and prefixes and suffixes and let it go at that?" asks the irrepressible Mr. S. For one thing, because you have tried to do it and failed. The scheme may be all right for adults, but growing children want something else for their mental pabulum besides concentrated food capsules, be they never so nourishing.

The help that Latin gives is twofold, quantitative and qualitative; it enlarges vocabulary and intensifies vocabulary. By this I mean that it gives the background, the aura, the overtones of a word. There is too a poetry, a romance, in words just as there is in a yellow primrose on the bank. The difference is that for the appreciation of the primrose you need a state of mind, while for the appreciation of an English word you need Latin.

While we are dealing with the matter of English derivatives it is well to mention one change in Latin teaching that has already been widely introduced and will become universal in the futuristic Latin, that is the so-called reading at sight. This was introduced for a variety of reasons, such as a desire to abolish the "pony," to establish college-entrance examinations which would allow greater freedom to the schools, and to get a measurable result from Latin teaching. It is excellent for all these reasons and for another besides. In sight translation the meaning of a new word must be arrived at in one of three ways—by related Latin words, by the

English derivative, or by the context, that is, by scientific guessing. In sight translation, therefore, English derivation must be stressed. Here is real efficiency—the English helps the Latin and the Latin helps the English.

The second linguistic value is in grammar. The word and the subject used to be held in such awe that the word “glamor” grew out of it in the speech of those who were themselves grammarless. But alas, the word has lost its glamor and is, in fact, somewhat disreputable for several reasons. For one thing it suggests the old-fashioned method of learning all the rules in the Latin grammar and then guessing which rule the teacher wanted to have recited in asking about the construction of, let us say, *agmine*. And again it suggests English grammar, and that is an unpleasant topic of conversation, especially among English teachers. Now as to Latin grammar—first, we have greatly reduced the amount of syntax to be learned by omitting nonessentials and subtle distinctions. This allows more time for the essentials. Then we have introduced the inductive method of teaching it.

But why study Latin syntax at all? Because it gives a knowledge of the fundamental principles of all languages, including our vernacular, English. It is a familiar fact that few pupils ever learn anything about English syntax through the study of formal grammar in English. The reason is obvious. English has too few of the inflected forms which distinguish constructions. It is again a familiar fact that pupils begin to understand English grammar after they have studied Latin a short time. The results attained by the teaching of formal English grammar have been so miserable that the attempt is being abandoned, and it is being urged that formal grammar is not worth while after all. Sour grapes! In place of formal grammar the pupil is to be surrounded by correct English, so that he may absorb the grammar that he cannot swallow. Absorption is good as far as it goes, but it is difficult to administer sufficient nourishment in that way. Hence the study of Latin grammar is a short cut to correct English. The Latin of the future must assume no knowledge of English grammar on the part of the pupil and must in fact see to it that the student gets this knowledge through Latin. Considerable work remains

to be done in correlating English and Latin grammar. The path has been made much smoother by the movement for uniform grammatical terminology in all languages, culminating in the published report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Nomenclature. Whatever objections there may be to individual points in the report, discerning teachers will realize the necessity for agreement in terminology. Let us for once lay aside the objections to "steam-roller" methods and remember that sometimes such methods are necessary for a smooth road.

A much-neglected phase of syntax is word order. Heretofore we have said little about it and allowed our students to absorb it, as the English teachers are trying to make their pupils absorb correct English and large vocabularies. The result has been that students have rarely gained a feeling for it, and then only after years of study. The matter is of importance: First, because a knowledge of the fundamental principles makes the understanding of Latin much easier, since word order aids in indicating syntactical relations. Such knowledge is particularly important with the method that is becoming more and more common of reading the Latin in the Latin order. Secondly, because a knowledge of the principles of word order is necessary for oral teaching, which is becoming a more important feature. Thirdly, because word order is an important element in style, and an understanding of it is necessary for an appreciation of style. Fourthly, because English style has been greatly influenced by Latin rhetorical style. A great deal of research is necessary to establish more fully the principles of Latin order and the influence of it on English. Then a practical teacher must select the essentials and present them in simple form to the pupil.

Summing up at this point, the importance of the Latin of the future can readily be seen, since it will teach the more difficult and essential phases of English vocabulary, grammar, and style.

As the linguistic value has the right of way in the first year of the course, so the content value assumes importance in the later years. And yet it has a field even in the first year. The ideas and ideals, the institutions and constitution, the culture and *kultur* of the Romans must be impressed on the students in the Latin class.

What's that? Oh, it's that Mr. Spoilsport again. I thought that he had gone for good. He wants to know the use of all that "stuff," as he calls it. It is simply that our whole civilization is based on the Roman, and that we need to understand the Roman to understand our own; and further, such comparative study gives us that broad view of things which is truly culture. Unfortunately we cannot estimate this influence in exact figures, as we can estimate the Latin influence on the English language. Perhaps the future will provide statistics for us.

And here we may pause to say a word about the war. We say that we are fighting for the preservation of our civilization—some indeed have said that this war is one between the Latin and the Teutonic civilization. And yet there are those who urge us to devote all our energies during and after the war to material things only. Shall we destroy our civilization to win the war? We must both keep our civilization and win the war, or our victory will be a Pyrrhic victory. With all the pressure of the war and its needs, it is vital that we do not forget for what we are fighting.

Mr. Spoilsport says, however, that it is the function of the history teacher to deal with civilization and such things. Well, what is the condition of our history teaching? Is it perfectly satisfactory? Far from it. How is it being improved? By studying private as well as public life, by using pictures, by reading source material, all with the idea of making the work concrete, objective. Now we Latinists are teaching history through the use of source material better than that of the ancient-history teacher, because we have it in its original form and not in translation. Cicero's speeches in the Latin represent *his exact words*. The great Shakespeare saw clearly how impressive such realism can be, for he made Caesar say, not "You too, Brutus," but "Et tu, Brute." The impression of these three little Latin words has been simply tremendous. In the *Gallic War* we have thousands of Caesar's actual words. This remark suggests our own weakness. We have failed to play up the importance and interest of this fact. We must make the pupil identify the "et tu Brute" Caesar with the Caesar who had so much Gaul, and to do this we must tell the story of Caesar's life and show how the conquest of Gaul led to the

"et tu Brute." The substance of the works we read, their historical setting, the political importance of their authors, must be considered in connection with the Latin itself; and above all, the material must be related to our modern world and its problems. The chasm of two thousand years must be bridged. This engineering feat remains to be completed by the Latin of the future. Means must be devised to enable all teachers to make constant comparisons in all fields, in private life and in public life, in matters of peace and in matters of war, in things of the spirit and in things of the flesh. In reading Caesar, for example, we need to make the pupils realize first of all that Gaul is France, then that Caesar's battlefields are again in part the battlefields of today, that the Gallic tribes of Caesar's story have given their names to towns made known to all of us by this war, as Soissons and Reims, that Caesar's military methods and even his ordnance may be seen again in this war. In Cicero there is opened up to us the whole fascinating subject of Roman politics, with its illuminating similarities to American politics in its constitutional, economic, and social aspects. Here then there is much to be done in making available for all teachers what individuals are now doing.

Of the literary side little need be said. The close attention devoted to it in the past makes it unnecessary in the future to devote much thought to novelties of presentation, though undoubtedly some will be developed.

As the content value depends to a large extent on the reading selected, it is convenient at this point to discuss the works to be read in the Latin of the future. Cicero's writings and especially his political speeches must always remain a substantial part of the Latin course, not only for their linguistic value, but for the fruitful comparisons between ancient and modern politics which they suggest, and for the opportunity they give to get a view of the history and development of the Roman Republic. Caesar falls in the linguistic period of the pupil's study, and his retention in the course depends on linguistic considerations. It seems certain that the amount of Caesar to be read in the future will be considerably reduced. The time devoted to Virgil may be reduced to give room for some material of greater historical value. We need to introduce

material that will give a glimpse of the condition of the Roman Empire.

Beside developing from within, so to speak, Latin teaching has been and will continue to be influenced from without. For example, the general demand for efficiency has affected Latin in at least two ways. One is in bringing about standardization. Vocabulary, word formation, and syntax have been standardized by Lodge's *Vocabulary of High-School Latin*, Jenks's *Manual of Latin Word Formation*, and Byrne's *Syntax of High-School Latin*. There is more work to be done along these lines. A second effect is in measurements. One type of measurement aims to show the value of Latin, another to measure results in teaching with a view to improving the teaching. A great deal remains to be done along both lines. In the latter particularly efforts have been rather crude.

In answer to the demand for socialization of our courses of instruction we now have Latin clubs, Latin newspapers, Latin bulletin boards, Latin exhibits, Latin scrapbooks, Latin games, Latin plays, Roman banquets, and innumerable other agencies which connect the study of Latin with the student's activities and interests. We use pictures, reproductions, stereopticons, and now even moving pictures. The Latin of the future will make more and more use of them as they are developed. Already a number of valuable films are available. By far the most important from the standpoint of Latin teaching is "Julius Caesar." It is a biography of the dictator from his youth to his funeral. There are scenes in Gaul of special interest to the second-year students, and scenes in the Roman senate for the third-year students. There is surprisingly little inaccuracy. We get a good and vivid idea of Roman houses, streets and costumes, soldiers, senators, and slaves. The Romans are made to live for even the most unimaginative. No student can fail to read his Caesar and Cicero with greater interest after seeing this picture. The *Odyssey* has been produced in moving pictures, and no doubt the *Aeneid* too will soon be available.

The Latin of the future will profit by other inventions and devices which we cannot now foresee. And it will be influenced, as it has been, by the teaching of other subjects. A notable instance is the direct method, borrowed from the modern languages.

It still seems true, as it seemed several years ago, that the direct method will not become the usual or even a common method of teaching Latin. But it has already had a wholesome effect in reviving the use of a limited amount of oral work especially needed to quicken the dull routine of learning forms.

A reform in the educational world which seems bound to succeed is the 6-3-3 or similar reorganization of the public-school system. This will have its effects on Latin teaching. Languages are more easily learned by younger pupils, and Latin will be begun by many pupils in the seventh grade, as it is already in many schools. Furthermore seventh-grade Latin will take care of the English-grammar problem at the proper time. Teaching Latin to younger students will bring newer methods. Interest devices will be more necessary, closer correlation of Latin and English syntax will be imperative, emphasis on English derivative work will be inevitable, and oral work will find a greater scope. In other words the very changes which, as we have seen, confront Latin teaching in general will be effected earlier and to a greater degree in junior high school Latin. The significance of this fact is that Latin undoubtedly belongs in the junior high school. But there are problems presented by seventh-grade Latin which must be solved by the experience of the future. One of the greatest is the relation of the Latin course begun in the seventh grade to that begun in the ninth or tenth grade. Shall they be identical or at least similar, or shall they bear no relation to each other? The latter alternative means lack of articulation, which spells failure for the whole junior high school project. Yet we must have two different courses because of the difference in the development of the pupils. The junior high school beginning Latin course must be given more time than that in the senior high school and different methods must be used. But the pupils must be brought to the same point at the end of the course, and that means the use of identical or very similar textbooks. Some schools have already come to a realization of this through experience.

Such then are some of the probable features of the Latin of the future. Many will say that there is scarcely a new thought

in what I have said. The more this is said the better pleased I shall be, for that will simply indicate that the progressive teachers are that much more numerous. Mr. Spoilsport won't say it, I am sure. Yet it is vain to hope that he has been silenced. Perhaps, however, we may retire without further interruption from him by quoting at him the fine words of Mr. Mackail: "Modern life owes its highest ideals, directly or indirectly, to the inspiration of Greece; it owes its whole structure and existence to the creation of Rome. And so also with the two languages; for while Greek is a language of unequalled beauty, flexibility, and strangeness, Latin is, to us and all the inheritors of the Latin civilization, a second mother-tongue."¹

¹ *Lectures on Poetry*, p. 72.